

# What Do the Procedure Pages Tell Me?

**Hospitals** are identified in a procedure table by major population centers within each region of the state. Hospitals not located in a designated population center are listed alphabetically under the heading Rest of Region.

**Average Annual Volume** indicates the average number of procedures performed per year at these hospitals during the calendar years 1998 through 2000. It was calculated by adding the number of procedures performed during the three-year period and dividing by three. *Hospitals that performed less, on average, than one procedure per year are not displayed.*

**Volume Thresholds** for hospitals and surgeons are reported in blue text after a description of the procedure. Compare a hospital's average annual procedure volume, from the table, to these recommended hospital thresholds. Keep in mind that volume below the recommended level does not in itself indicate poor quality of care. The Department did not evaluate each hospital's surgery outcomes. Here, we only report evidence-based volume thresholds from reputable research studies. References for these thresholds can be found in the bibliography.

**Procedure-Specific Questions** suggest surgery related information that is useful for you to know. Listen carefully to the responses of both your primary doctor and the surgeon. Write down their answers or have them written for you.

## How was this report developed?

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, in consultation with an advisory committee, reviewed research studies that address the relationship between volume of procedure and quality of care for each of the procedures presented in this guide. Most of these studies suggest that the more a hospital or physician performs each of these particular procedures, the better the patient outcome. Patient outcomes were indicated as mortality (death) rates, complications after surgery, and/or re-hospitalization (readmission) rates after discharge.

Data used in this guide come from the most recent annual hospital discharge records reported to the Department as required by Administrative Rule 19-10-33.010. Information on surgery volume is primarily useful to the patient who has time to discuss pending procedures with their physician and other health care professionals.

## Questions to Discuss with Your Doctor and Surgeon

Remember that you need to develop a partnership with your physician to assist you in making more informed decisions about your medical care. A key to developing that partnership is to discuss your care and ask questions. When your primary care doctor refers you to a surgeon there are also a number of questions that you need to consider asking. These include the following questions.

- ◆ What are the risks involved with this procedure?
- ◆ Why do I need to have this procedure?
- ◆ How long will I have to stay in the hospital after the surgery?
- ◆ How long will I take to recover?
- ◆ How soon will I be able to return to work?
- ◆ Will I have to follow a special diet?
- ◆ Will I have to change my physical activity after my surgery?
- ◆ Will I need to take medication after my surgery?
- ◆ How many of these surgeries have you done?
- ◆ Who will actually perform my surgery?
- ◆ Who will be assisting the doctor in the operating room?
- ◆ How will I be prepared for my surgery?
- ◆ How should I prepare for the surgery?
- ◆ How many of these surgeries have been performed in this hospital?